

Approved For Release 2002/08/28 : CIA-RDP63-00313A000600110017-6
This document contains information
referring to Project CORONA

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78-8861
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29 July 1958

MEMORANDUM TO: Special Assistant to the Director
for Planning and Development

SUBJECT : THOR-ABLE Launch (10 July)

NRO REVIEW COMPLETED

1. The attached:

- a) Operations Requirement #803
- b) Operations Directive #803

same subject as above, are forwarded for your information.

2. As pertains to Project CORONA, it is felt that significant information was gained relative to Air Weather Service. At the present time Project Headquarters and Air Weather Service are not fully aware of all of the weather requirements nor the lead time that will be required by Air Weather Service to be in a position to support the project. The answers to the above can only be obtained from Air Weather Service. Items that might be a problem area to Air Weather Service and/or create a delay are:

- a) Additional data may be required.
- b) Additional resources, including manpower, may be required.
- c) New equipments and techniques may be required since "CORONA" involves altitudes not normally of concern to the AWS.
- d) Climatic studies will be required in order to determine the best manner in which to plan the flights.
- e) Analysis of problems involving launch, reentry, and recovery will be required, involving long range planning and operational information.

3. The possible problem areas mentioned above are based on conversations between the undersigned and Air Weather Service personnel using the THOR-ABLE 10 July launch and WS-117L as agenda items. Specific information concerning the possible problem areas mentioned above is as follows:

- a) Each missile launch requires the support and movement of an aerial weather reconnaissance squadron using WB-50 aircraft. Approximately 70% of the factors used in scheduling, tracking and reentry CEP determination is provided by this unit.

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b) WB-50 aircraft as presently equipped cannot provide adequate data. WADC is working on a system called AN/AMQ-15 which will be able to provide data up to 150,000.

c) Climatological studies to provide detailed information on cloud distribution and frequency over areas of interest will be required. Data at the present time is processed manually and to do a thorough job as pertains to Project "CORONA" would require 1½ - 2 years.

d) Consultant Service - the complexity of the problems and the preparatory time and support required indicate that the best qualified AWS meteorologist should be made available to the project. Additional reason would be that factors not normally used will be of significance such as high level wind, density, turbulence, etc. This service is considered most important because it involves the application of environmental data to a new type of activity or operation.

e) Long range planning and operational forecasts must be tailored to the specific problem. Indications are that personnel doing this type of work should be on the job at least one month prior to actual operations.

f) To date no requirement has been placed on Air Weather Service to support WS-117L. They have been expecting it but have not been approached to date. As a result they can take no action since the action could not be supported or justified in terms of a stated operational requirement or as a task laid on by higher authority.

4. Project support and/or emphasis in the form of a requirement formally stated to AWS would

a) Allow for the most effective and efficient operation as pertains to Project Headquarters.

b) Place AWS in a position to request expedited action on airborne equipments, computers, etc., now under development.

c) Allow for the services of the best qualified consultant.
(Dr. Fletcher)

5. In view of all of the above and the estimated target date to commence operations it is strongly recommended that the following AWS personnel be briefed and AWS support solicited:

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Col. N. L. Peterson, Commander AWS
Col. J. T. Seaver, Deputy Commander AWS
Lt. Col. A. Gaertner, Jr., Hqs AWS Project Officer for AQUATONE
Major J. R. Smith, Hqs AWS Project Officer for AQUATONE Cover
Dr. R. D. Fletcher, AWS Directorate of Scientific Services
[redacted] Project Weather Officer

[redacted]
Director of Operations

CONCUR in par 5.

R. M. BISSELL, JR.

DPS/DCI, [redacted]

Dist.:

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